

Special Meeting of Council

Date of Meeting:	15 th December 2021
Report Title:	Appointment of Honorary Aldermen /Women, Honorary Freemen / Women and related civic issues
Report of:	Jane Burns, Executive Director of Corporate Services
Ward(s) Affected:	All Wards

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1** The Local Government Act 1972 gives Councils the power to appoint former Councillors to the position Honorary Alderman / Woman, if in the view of the Council they have rendered eminent service to the Council. The same legislation enables Councils to appoint as Honorary Freemen / Women, any individual who in the view of the Council is a person of distinction who has rendered “eminent service”. Such honours must be conferred at a Special Meeting of Council, with two thirds of those Members in attendance supporting the resolution.

2. Recommendations

- (i) Recognising the meritorious service to the Cheshire East community over many years, and to implement the resolution of the Constitution Committee held on 21st November 2019, those former Members of the Council named in Appendix I be appointed as Honorary Aldermen / Women of the Borough.
- (ii) Recognising their success at the Tokyo Olympics / Paralympics and the example that they set to others, that those named in Appendix II be appointed as Freemen / Women of the Borough.
- (iii) That subject to any Coronavirus restrictions the Mayor host a civic reception on or before Mayor Making 2022 to formally make the awards of Honorary Freemen / Women and Aldermen / Women and to award Cllr Barry Burkhill and his Mayoress with medals to mark their period in office.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 Council's last formal civic event was Mayor Making in May 2019, since then there have been no formal civic events. As Members will be aware, meetings of the Council since spring of 2020 have either been held virtually or have been subject to Coronavirus restrictions. Had it not been for the pandemic the Council would, since the May 2019 elections have expected to have held a civic event for the purpose of bestowing honours on former Members.
- 3.2 At its meeting on 21st November 2019 the former Constitution Committee resolved that 14 past Members of the Council (see appendix I), who met the relevant criteria (twelve years service on Cheshire East Council / predecessor council), should be appointed as Honorary Aldermen / women. It had been hoped that a Special Meeting of Council would have been held in the spring of 2020 to formally make the appointments; this was not possible.
- 3.3 It has been the tradition of the Council since the London Olympics and Paralympics in 2012, to honour with the Freedom of the Borough, those medallists with close links to the Borough of Cheshire East. The Freedom of the Borough is the highest honour that a Council can bestow. The honour recognises the success of the athletes along with the fact that they are role models for others, demonstrating what hard work and commitment, along with talent, can achieve. There are a number of athletes with links to the Borough of Cheshire East who won medals at the recent Tokyo Games (see appendix II).
- 3.4 It had been hoped that appropriate recognition could be given to civic matters at a Special Meeting of Council held on the same day as the regular December 2021 meeting, with those being recognised attending along with a small number of guests. The continuing position in respect of the pandemic resulted in a decision by the Mayor, following consultation with the Group Leaders that this would not be the most appropriate way to proceed, as the numbers potentially attending such a meeting could easily exceed 150.
- 3.5 In order to fulfil the expectation of Members, and those who would qualify for the honour of Freeman / Woman or Alderman / Woman, it was therefore decided that this Special Meeting of Council should consider recommendations to immediately bestow such honours upon the individuals in question, with agreement that appropriate civic recognition of the same should take place at or before the Mayor Making meeting of Council in May 2022, always subject to Covid-19 considerations. In effect this means that the awards proposed today of Honorary Freeman / Women and Honorary Aldermen / Women, should the resolutions receive the necessary two thirds majority, will be made in absentia, with the Mayor hosting a civic event at a later date to make the awards.
- 3.6 Outgoing Mayors are normally presented at Mayor Making with a medal to mark their term in office. A medal is also presented to their consort. As no formal Mayor Making was held in 2021 these medals have not been presented, and the tributes that are due to an outgoing Mayor have not been made. A civic

event hosted by the Mayor would be the ideal opportunity for medals to be presented and tributes made.

4 Implications

4.1 Legal

4.1.1 There are no legal implications.

4.2 Finance

4.2.1 There are minimal financial implications. The modest cost of hosting a civic reception will be met from the Democratic Services budget.

4.3 Policy

4.3.1 There are no equality implications.

4.4 Equality

4.4.1 There are no equality implications.

4.5 Human Resources

4.5.1 There are HR implications.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 There are no risk management implications.

4.7 Rural Communities

4.7.1 There are no implications for rural communities.

4.8 Children and Young People/Cared for Children

4.8.1 There are no implications for children and young people.

4.9 Public Health

4.9.1 A civic reception will not be held until it is safe to do so in the context of the pandemic.

4.10 Climate Change

4.10.1 There are no climate change implications.

Access to Information	
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Appendices:	Appendix I – Former Members of the Council Appendix II – Success at Tokyo Olympics / Paralympics
Background Papers:	Report to Constitution Committee 21 November 2019

Appendix I

The former Constitution Committee at its meeting on 21st November 2019 resolved that the former Members named below, all of whom had served for at least twelve years on Cheshire East and a predecessor Council, be appointed as Honorary Aldermen.

Mrs Rhoda Bailey
Mr Gary Barton
Mr Gordon Baxendale
Mr Derek Bebbington
Mr Harold Davenport
Mrs Hilda Gaddum
Mr Simon McCrory
Mr Jamie Macrae
Mr Rod Menlove
Mrs Gill Merry
Mr Barry Moran
Mr Howard Murray
Mr Michael Parsons
Mr George Walton

Appendix II

At the 2020 Tokyo Olympics / Paralympics (held in 2021) the following athletes with close links to Cheshire East won medals.

Ms Karris Artingstall (Bronze Medal, Boxing, Olympics)
Mr Jody Cundy OBE (Gold Medal, Cycling, Paralympics)
Mr John Gimson (Silver Medal, Sailing, Olympics)
Mr Stuart Wood (Bronze Medal, Canoeing, Paralympics)

NB: Several other athletes with close links to Cheshire East (most notably Dame Sarah Storey, Mr Jason Kenny CBE and Mrs Laura Kenny CBE) won medals at the Games but had been appointed as Freemen of the Borough following success at previous Games. Freedom of the Borough can only be conferred once. There was one athlete who won a medal, who whilst born in what is now Cheshire East, moved away at a young age and when informally approached declined from having their name put forward for the Freedom of the Borough.